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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0384
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5518
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 3186
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1359
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 2345
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 5035
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2632
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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 001948

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEAN](#) [ID](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: ASEAN CHARTER RATIFIED BY INDONESIAN PARLIAMENT

REF: JAKARTA 1893 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Indonesian Parliament ratified the ASEAN Charter on October 21. The move was expected and came after the committee dealing with foreign affairs recommended that Parliament in full plenary pass the Charter. We understand that the legislation contains non-binding "policy directives" related to human rights proposed by members concerned with the Burma situation. According to our contacts, the Charter is slated to be signed by President Yudhoyono next month. END SUMMARY.

CHARTER RATIFIED

¶2. (U) On October 21, the Indonesian Parliament (locally known by the acronym "DPR") ratified the ASEAN Charter. The legislation passed with unanimous support in the 550-seat body. The ratification of the Charter was expected, coming as it did after the October 8 decision by Commission I (the committee dealing with international and security affairs) to support it (see ref a). The ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta welcomed the DPR's action.

NON-BINDING LANGUAGE

¶3. (C) As reviewed more thoroughly in ref a, we understand that the legislation contains non-binding "policy directives" related to human rights. This language was placed in the legislation by a handful of legislators who are extremely concerned by the actions of the Burmese regime, and who have repeatedly urged ASEAN and Indonesia to be active on the matter.

¶4. (C) The directives, inter alia, request that the Indonesian government work to ensure that ASEAN establishes the proposed human rights body as soon as possible and that it conform to "international standards." In addition, ASEAN should work to ensure that member-states comply with the Charter's provisions or face possible sanctions. DPR members to whom we have spoken admit that they cannot require that the GOI take such steps. They asserted, however, that they will press the government to press these issues hard.

15. (C) GOI contacts say they take the DPR's language seriously, but note that ASEAN is a consensus organization and the GOI cannot always get its way. Foreign Minister Wirajuda told Parliament on October 21 that the GOI was committed to try to improve the Charter via amendments down the road. Re Burma, he added: "Once the Charter is formed, we will see how serious Myanmar is in making its roadmap to democracy. We will see if it keeps to its promises."

NEXT STEPS

16. (U) President Yudhoyono is scheduled to sign the legislation in November. At that time, the legislation will be officially published (the exact text is not yet available). ASEAN leaders are slated to launch the Charter on an official basis during their December Summit in Bangkok.

HUME